

# Red Cross

**Overview:**

Students will learn about the value of volunteer organizations in their community and about the work of the Red Cross. They will learn research techniques as they gather information about their chosen volunteer group and develop strong presentation skills as they try to “sell” their group to their peers. The class will participate in reflective decision-making and follow their progress as they participate in volunteer activities for the “winning” group.

**Objectives:**

1. Understand the history and background of the Red Cross.
2. Learn more about the importance of volunteer activities.
3. Identify needs in their community that can be served with volunteer activities.
4. Create a network of volunteers.

**Materials:**

- Access to history and information of the Red Cross. A list of local chapters is at <http://www.redcross.org/where/chapts.asp>
- Facts and Figures sheets for as many charitable organizations as groups you’ll divide the class into, or include this as part of the students’ work
- Role-playing cards
- Decision-making rubric

**Handouts:**

- [Red Cross \(Secondary\)](#)

**Procedure:**

1. On the board, draw the symbol of the Red Cross. Ask students what it means to them.
2. Explain that the symbol is the internationally recognized mark of the Red Cross.
3. Explain that the Red Cross needs a lot of people who will work for them for no money. Explore the concept of volunteerism.
4. Brainstorm about other organizations that use volunteers and write them on the board. Discuss students’ feelings about volunteering. List pros and cons on the board.

## Red Cross

5. Randomly divide the class into groups of four and explain that each group will choose its own volunteer group.
6. The objective is to learn as much as they can about their volunteer group, using the role-playing cards. Then they're to promote the group to the whole class.
7. Each group must make a presentation on their volunteer group to the class, including as much information as possible to help the class make a fair decision about which group they will choose. Distribute the Facts and Figures sheet to each group or have the class come up with their own ideas of what should be included in the research.
8. As each group makes its presentation, other students should fill in their decision-making rubrics.
9. Gather the rubrics and summarize the results when the winning group is announced.
10. The winning group will be where the students will volunteer for a determined period of time.
11. To ensure that the volunteer work is maintained throughout the year and to give the students ample opportunities to reflect on its value, encourage them to present, publish, or photograph the work as they participate.

This lesson is part of a regular feature in Josephson Institute's monthly e-newsletter, the Chronicle. To subscribe, visit the CHARACTER COUNTS! website: <http://www.charactercounts.org/chronicle/>

---

### McREL standards

#### Civics

**Standard 10.** Understands the roles of voluntarism and organized groups in American social and political life.

**Level IV Benchmark 6.** Knows the historical and contemporary role of various organized groups in local, state, and national politics (e.g., unions; professional organizations; religious, charitable, service, and civic groups).

<http://www.mcrel.org/Standards-benchmarks/>